

Media, PA – More than 300 attendees and representatives from more than 70 service organizations joined Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) and other government officials, including Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, to discuss individual needs and address broader concerns about seniors' issues. The Senior Summit and Service Fair commenced with an announcement by Congressman Sestak that he is introducing new legislation to reward seniors who volunteer in their communities. Providing for a Silver Scholarship Program, the bill will offer a \$1000 scholarship to anyone 55 years of age or older, who performs 500 hours of volunteer services in a 12 month period. The program will specifically encourage seniors to use their time, talent, experience and resources to mentor young children and youth in after-school programs. — “We should not overlook either the valuable roles that seniors can have as mentors or by contributing to community service projects,” said Congressman Sestak. “And with seniors living longer and healthier than ever before we should both promote involvement in their communities and find ways to provide benefits, such as through continuing education, to further enhance their quality of life.”

After the legislative announcement, Congressman Sestak lead government representatives at the federal, state and county level in a panel discussion about issues ranging from elder abuse to health insurance, social security and long-term care. The discussion was followed by a service fair at which more than 70 organizations will offer their expertise on senior issues. Caseworkers were available to address specific concerns from seniors, family members and care-givers.

“Seniors represent more than 15 percent of the residents in my District, and they are facing a wide range of challenges, especially considering our struggling economy and rising costs of food and gas,” said Congressman Sestak. “This event was an excellent opportunity to provide seniors with important information and address individual problems they may be facing.”

“I eagerly accepted Representative Sestak’s invitation to join the panel discussion at the Senior Summit and Service Fair so I could let attendees know about the new State Plan on Aging and how our many programs can help them,” said Secretary Eisenhower. “It’s very important to me to meet our older citizens and hear about their needs and concerns.”

In addition, with energy costs still high, the Congressman addressed steps he is taking to make heating one’s residence more affordable this winter. For instance, he has strongly supported H. Con. Res. 312, which would maintain the Weatherization Assistance Program increase energy spending by \$1.2 billion (including increases in efficient and renewable energy), and specifically

reject the President's proposed cut to LIHEAP, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which is a vital component for funding the weatherization program.

Additionally, Congressman Sestak mentioned that he has introduced the Elder Abuse Victims Act. He noted its special significance to him as his testimony before the Judiciary Committee on this subject was the first House hearing on elder abuse in 17 years. The Act is aimed to protect America's seniors from physical, mental and financial abuse by addressing and correcting the failures in state elder abuse policies, establishing a Center for the Prosecution of Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation, and funding Elder Abuse Victims' Advocacy Grants.

"With nearly two million Americans age 65 or older subject to elder abuse, we are long overdue in addressing this issue," said Congressman Sestak. "The Elder Abuse Victims Act is an essential first step to ensuring the well-being of our nation's senior citizens."

The Congressman has worked to improve the quality of life for seniors through many other significant pieces of legislation and, specifically, by supporting the "CHAMP" Act. This bill would eliminate co-payments and deductibles for preventative services and initial preventative exams as well as provide free mammograms and screening tests for glaucoma and prostate cancer, among others. Additionally, the Congressman co-sponsored the Alzheimer's Treatment and Caregiver Support Act, which offers grants to improve treatment services and expand training and support for families and caregivers of the 4.5 million Americans afflicted with the disease.

Additional Legislation:

- The Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act, which he helped to pass in the House as a cosponsor, allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate lower drug prices for seniors.
- In June 2008, Congressman Sestak voted in favor of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, which offers greater assistance to beneficiaries most in need, and ensures that all Medicare recipients receive quality care. The legislation includes approximately \$4.5 billion to directly assist patients, particularly in the areas of preventative care and mental health. The act also addresses the needs of physicians and health care providers, medical equipment providers, and pharmacies so that they may increase the quality and affordability of services.

- The Congressman is a co-sponsor of the Community Choice Act of 2007, which would allow those eligible for Medicaid-funded assisted living to live at home rather than moving to long-term care facilities.
- He has supported legislation that saves a vital housing program for seniors that enables them to remain financially independent without selling their homes.
- The Congressman introduced the Small Business Entrepreneurial Development Programs Act, which would enhance critical programs like the Service Corps for Retired Executives (SCORE), which provides entrepreneurs with free counseling assistance by former executives.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.